

Message Text

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FOL PARIS 6034 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BONN ROME MADRID
USNATO FEB 22, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

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TAGS: ENRG FR
SUBJ: COMMISSARIAT A L'ENERGIE SOLAIRE

REF: PARIS 2537

1. THE FEB 22 COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING DECIDED ON
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A "COMMISSARIAT A L'ENERGIE
SOLAIRE," SOLAR ENERGY COMMISSION. THIS IDEA WAS FIRST
MADE PUBLIC ON JAN 26 DURING AN INTERVIEW WITH FRENCH
PRESIDENT GISCARD IN LE MONDE, AS REPORTED REFTEL.

2. THE NEW ORGANIZATION WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR
ELABORATING AND IMPLEMENTING SOLAR ENERGY POLICY,
CARRYING OUT RESEARCH IN THIS FIELD, OR DELEGATING IT TO
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OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. ITS AS YET UNNAMED PRESIDENT WILL
LEAD AN ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL OF 13 MEMBERS WHICH WILL
HAVE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRINCIPAL EFFORTS IN THIS
FIELD NOW BEING CARRIED OUT IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
SECTOR. IT IS TO BE ASSISTED BY A SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY
BOARD.

3. FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD POINTED OUT IN ANNOUNCING THE CREATION OF THE NEW AGENCY THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOLAR ENERGY CONSTITUTES A PRINCIPAL LONG TERM PRIORITY IN ENERGY PLANNING SINCE THAT FORM OF ENERGY HAS THREE ADVANTAGES: IT ALLOWS FRANCE TO REDUCE HER ENERGY DEPENDENCE. THIS FORM OF ENERGY IS NON-POLLUTING AND THUS ITS USE IS PART OF FRANCE'S POLICY OF GREATER RESPECT FOR NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT. AND IT OPENS NEW PROSPECTIVES FOR FRENCH INDUSTRY IN AN AREA WHERE INTERESTING EXPORT POSSIBILITIES ARE PRESENT.

4. THE NEW AGENCY'S NAME - NEARLY IDENTICAL TO THAT OF THE FRENCH ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION (COMMISSARIAT A L'ENERGIE ATOMIQUE) - CONVEYS AN IMPRESSION THAT SOLAR ENERGY IS ON AN EQUAL FOOTING WITH ATOMIC. GIVEN THE CONTROVERSY AGAINST NUCLEAR ENERGY, IT MAKES VERY GOOD ELECTORAL SENSE TO PUT SOLAR OUT FRONT, EVEN IF MOST RATIONAL PARAMETERS WOULD SHOW THAT IT IS FAR BEHIND NUCLEAR. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE MOVE GOES WELL BEYOND NEXT MONTH'S ELECTIONS. HARTMAN UNQUOTE VANCE

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